

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICES OF AFRICAN AMERICANS
IN ACADEMIA: A STUDY OF MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS OF
THE SPEECH COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION**

A Thesis

Presented to

**the Faculty of the Department of Communication
and Broadcasting**

Western Kentucky University

Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Carrie Louvonne Hayes Thornton

August 1994

FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICES OF AFRICAN AMERICANS
IN ACADEMIA: A STUDY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS
OF THE SPEECH COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

Date Recommended July 12, 1994

Larry M. Caillonet

Director of Thesis

Randall Byrnes

Larry Wiers

Judith Hoover

Elmer Gray

Director of Graduate Studies

8/4/94

Date

FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICES OF AFRICAN AMERICANS
IN ACADEMIA: A STUDY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS
OF THE SPEECH COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

Carrie Thornton

August 1994

69 Pages

Directed by: Larry Caillouet

Committee Members: Randall Capps, Judith Hoover, and
Larry Winn

Department of Communication/Broadcasting
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY

The purpose of this thesis is to study the influence of social, economic, occupational, cultural, educational, and demographic factors among African American communication professionals on their career choices.

A quantitative research design was chosen for this research. The 300-member Black Caucus of the Speech Communication Association was chosen as the survey population. Each member was mailed a 17-item questionnaire. Of the 141 members who responded, 83 were African American; their responses were used in all data analyses.

The major findings of this study are the following: (1) interest in or knowledge of the communication field was a significantly more important influence than job security, prestige, financial benefits, or social interaction with peers; (2) two-parent households increase the likelihood of success in college thereby increasing the likelihood of African American students choosing college teaching as a career; (3) African American role models and mentors have a strong influence on African American students and their career choices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many thanks to my thesis committee, Dr. Larry Caillouet, Dr. Randall Capps, Dr. Judith Hoover, and Dr. Larry Winn for all your help and encouragement during this study; to the Office of Graduate Studies: Doris, Bettie, Lou, Lynne, Angela, and Jana for all your help and your encouragement through this thesis process; to Dr. Lyndrey Niles, Black Caucus Head of the Speech Communication Association, and Dr. R. Pierre Rodgers, Editor of the Speech Communication Newsletter, for allowing me access to the Black Caucus mailing list; and to Jan Meek Phillips for your "eagle eyes." Many special thanks to Dr. Livingston Alexander and Dr. Elmer Gray for all of your inspirational "pep talks" and your constant encouragement. I want to thank my family for all your patience and understanding during this thesis research. Above all, I want to thank God for making all things possible.

I dedicate this thesis to my family: my husband, Steve; my sons, Stephen and Roderick; my daughter, Carisha; and my parents, Pearline Hayes and the late Riley Hayes. I love you all!!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Thesis Research Question	4
Overview of the Thesis	4
Chapter Two: Review of Literature	6
Need for African American Faculty	7
Problems Obtaining Qualified African American Prospects	12
Problems Retaining Qualified African American Faculty	14
Chapter Three: Methodology	19
Chapter Four: Results	23
Table 4.1	24
Table 4.2	26
Table 4.3	27
Table 4.4	29
Table 4.5	30
Table 4.6	32
Table 4.7	33
Table 4.8	34
Table 4.9	35
Table 4.10	36
Table 4.11	37
Table 4.12	38
Table 4.13	40
Research Questions and Research Findings	41
Chapter Five: Discussion	45
Bibliograhpy	51
Appendix:	
Appendix A: Cover Letter	54
Appendix B: Thesis Questionnaire	55
Appendix C: Verbatim Responses for Question #17	59

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Why are so many colleges and universities in the United States experiencing difficulty in recruiting African American faculty? Are there enough qualified African American prospects? If there are, how far do colleges and universities have to go to hire them? If not enough qualified faculty or prospects exist, what could be done to guide students toward college teaching?

Over the last thirty years, many changes have occurred in higher education. For the first time, black educators were given the opportunity to teach in predominantly white colleges and universities, and black students were given the opportunity to attend these institutions.

Today many appropriately educated blacks with the potential to be college faculty are choosing not to teach. People should wonder if today's youth are being encouraged to become college teachers or school teachers as strongly as they are encouraged to become athletes, entertainers, doctors, lawyers, or entrepreneurs. These professions should not be slighted, but neither should teaching.

Action needs to be taken to advance African Americans' access to a quality education at all levels, from preschool through graduate school. If nothing is done, we could go into the twenty-first century still needfull of African American faculty. This thesis research should help to pinpoint some factors that were influential in determining why more African Americans do not choose college teaching as a profession.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this thesis is to determine attitudes and experiences among students of speech communication, corporate & organizational communication, and mass communication that led them toward or away from college teaching as a career. Results obtained from a survey questionnaire yield this data.

The presence of African American faculty on a campus would diversify the faculty and thus increase both students' and faculty's awareness of an important minority culture. In addition, African American students would see African Americans functioning in the academic atmosphere and serving as mentors and as role models. Finally, African American faculty could benefit from the relationships formed within this group of peers.

An inquiry was made to Kentucky's seven largest colleges and universities regarding the number of African American full-time faculty employed and their teaching disciplines. Three of the seven institutions responded. Morehead State University's faculty for fall, 1993, was 6 full-time African Americans with none in the communication area as compared to 315 Caucasian full-time faculty with 22 in the communication area. The University of Louisville's faculty for fall, 1993, was 61 full-time African Americans with 2 in the communication area as compared to 807 full-time Caucasian faculty with 12 in the communication area. Western Kentucky University's faculty for fall, 1993, was 18 African American and 2 African full-time faculty with 1 African in the communication area as compared to 516 Caucasian faculty with 14 in the communication area. African Americans comprise 1%, 7%, and 3%, respectively, of the overall faculty at these three universities and a negligible percentage of the communication faculty. These representations reflect full-time teaching faculty and do not reflect the faculty classified as administrators.

Hopefully the research question for this thesis reveal reasons why African American communication majors made their particular career choices. It is hopeful that the research results will provide information, for college teachers, that could be used

to encourage African American students to consider college teaching as a career.

THESIS RESEARCH QUESTION

What factors influenced African American communication majors to choose college teaching versus non-teaching careers?

- A. Were these factors social, economic, occupational, cultural, demographic, or financial?
- B. What effect did their parental structure, their parent's educational level, and their community have on their career decisions?
- C. What effect did their experiences in formal education have in influencing their career decisions?
- D. What effect did their life experiences have in influencing their career decisions?

OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

Chapter One includes the statement of purpose of this thesis, the rationale, and the research question. Chapter Two contains the literature review and some additional information that will provide statistical information pertinent to the subject. Chapter Three is a description of the process used to collect the data, a rationale for the particular method chosen,

questionnaire construction, a rationale for the particular survey population, and methods of data analysis. Presented in Chapter Four are the results derived from the survey. Chapter Five discusses the connections between the data collected and the information received from the literature review, as well as implications and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In his study of African American college students' outcomes at predominantly white and historically black public colleges and universities, Allen concluded that increased access to higher education by African American students is a major solution to the problem of racial inequality (Allen, 1992). However, blacks are underrepresented in graduate and professional education even though they desire to attain a higher level of education. African American students are generally 2.5 years older than white students, and they are more likely to represent the lowest family incomes (Sullivan and Nowlin 1990).

Sullivan and Nowlin (1990) suggested that the low number of minorities in academia and the fact that minorities are likely to come from low income families are issues that need to be addressed. Academia cannot increase and retain minority students in graduate school until the financial pressures students face are understood. Sullivan and Nowlin found that although most of the concerns of affirmative action were directed toward blacks, most data do not suggest that blacks were being awarded a proportionate percentage of appointments, promotions, or tenure (1990).

Three basic themes emerge from the literature review for this thesis: (1) a need for African American faculty, (2) problems obtaining qualified African American prospects, and (3) problems in retaining African American faculty.

A NEED FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY

According to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (now Department of Health & Human Services), the fact that less than one percent of many colleges' faculties are black indicates discrimination (Bunzel, 1990). When a college or university has a large number of African American faculty, the college or university becomes more comfortable and more attractive to African American students. Currently there are not enough African American faculty to make these students feel comfortable. Bunzel (1990) contended that some administrators and professors feel that while some colleges and universities do give serious attention to hiring African American prospects and are committed to affirmative action plans, many educational institutions are not making the extra effort to recruit qualified African American candidates.

Affirmative action raises costs for management by increasing recruiting costs in terms of faculty time and departmental and institutional resources, by introducing additional or alternative criteria for

evaluating workers by requiring expanded grievance and appeal procedures for those who feel they have been dealt with unfairly, and by increasing costs in faculty and administrative time and resources in implementing actions that require extensive changes of habits and traditions (Exum, Menges, Watkins, and Berglund, 1984). Other experts believe that campus authorities are not concerned with the special needs of black people in general; therefore, they ignore the racism that stems from the absence of African American faculty (Bunzel, 1990).

Brown (1988), as cited in the Lessow-Hurley (1989) article "Recruitment and Retention of Minority Faculty: Affirmative Action Strategies," notes that "relatively few members of minority groups have access to higher education, and among those who do, college teaching is not always an attractive career choice."

Hocker stated in his article "In Search of Black Faculty," the U.S. Census Bureau showed that blacks represented 28% of all undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24 in 1988 (Hocker, 1991). Hocker also stated that African Americans make up 12% of the population with 4% of the professors being employed nationwide by undergraduate institutions (1990). "The underrepresentation of African American faculty as compared to blacks' proportion of the general

population and the student population, is consistent with the nation's business, medical, and law schools," Hocker stated (1991). In a 1990 study from the U. S. Census Bureau concerning the number of African American students 25 years and older, 15.6% of Caucasian males have bachelor's degrees or higher compared to 7.6% of African American males with bachelor's degrees or higher; 12.4% of Caucasian females have bachelor's degrees or higher compared to 7.9% of African American females who have bachelor's degrees or higher. Also listed in this report from the Census Bureau, 9,290 doctorate degrees were awarded to white males and females compared to 280 doctorate degrees awarded to black males and females; 85,299 masters degrees were awarded compared to 3,331 awarded; 27,365 professional school degrees awarded compared to 521 awarded (Brown, 1993).

The lack of minority faculty resulting in a lack of role models continues to be cited as one of the major reasons colleges and universities have difficulty in recruiting and retaining non-Asian minority students (Sullivan and Nowlin, 1990). Black role models help black students feel successful and in turn help them be productive. On the graduate level, students develop apprentice/mentor or personal relationships with graduate professors. Staples said, "Black students tend to maintain a more formal relationship with white

professors and there are rarely any black faculty members to serve as role models or mentors" (1984). Blacks and whites do not socialize easily because of their different lifestyles, their different experiences, their different set of values, and their lack of mutual trust (Staples, 1984). White professors tend to be interested in students who will adopt, or who already share, their research interest. Black graduate students mostly pick subjects that are related to their culture, something that a white faculty person may not be familiar with or a subject that may not be of any scholarly value (Staples, 1984). White students also need to see blacks and other minorities in faculty positions; not only would this visibility enhance students' perception of blacks, but it would also enhance efforts toward cultural diversity while at the same time alleviating some basic negative stereotypes (Staples, 1984).

Thernstrom (1991), on the other hand, stated that African Americans benefit from role models in general and that African American students do not need African American professors as role models. If black educational standards were in genuine crisis, he asserts, the role model solution would not be the answer. He presents District 5 in New York City as an example. This district has a staff that is 70% minority, and this particular district finished last

among 32 districts on their city-wide reading scores (Thernstrom, 1991).

Others argue, however, that black faculty have a special and direct influence on the attraction, recruitment, retention, and career development of future generations of minority scholars and professionals. Black faculty make a unique contribution to the advancement of learning and culture in American society. Due to the anticipated retirement of present faculty in the late 1990s, the number of new openings in the nation's colleges and universities will expand. Minority faculty are a major resource that the United States cannot afford to overlook to increase the production of future generations of minority scholars and professionals (Brown, 1988).

Sullivan and Nowlin (1990) stated that colleges and universities benefit from millions of dollars of federal aid. Congress, in return, expects good-faith, results-oriented, equal employment, Affirmative Action efforts. They also stated that the federal government has been lax in vigorously enforcing anti-discrimination statutes since 1981 in higher education, and because of this laxness, the Affirmative Action efforts have been ineffective and inefficient (Sullivan and Nowlin, 1990).

Wagener (1991) claims that by the year 2000, nearly one in three college-age students and one third of the nation's work force will be persons of color.

If higher education's teaching force is to begin to approximate the diversity of the nation, extraordinary efforts will be required at the doctoral-granting universities in the next decade. Planning for an increased number of minority scholar-teachers is imperative. What we are learning is that traditional affirmative action efforts are not sufficient and that new kinds of intensive efforts are needed to produce more minority scholars in the United States (Wagener, 1991).

PROBLEMS OBTAINING QUALIFIED AFRICAN AMERICAN PROSPECTS

Over the last ten years, the number of African Americans earning doctoral degrees in American universities has substantially declined. Hocker (1991) contends that African Americans make up an estimated 12% of the U.S. population but only about 4% of the professors employed by the nation's undergraduate institutions are African American. This low number of African American prospects results in a serious shortage of potential qualified African American faculty. The percentage of doctorates awarded to African Americans has actually decreased by more than 23% in the past decade (Wagener, 1991).

Postdoctoral training helps new Ph.D. recipients become competitive for top faculty positions. In recent years, however, there has been a shift in training

among minorities with Asian-Americans leading the group in postdoctoral study. Hispanics ranked second, and their rates were twice that of African American postdoctorates. Less than 10% of all African American Ph.D.'s had plans for postdoctoral study in 1986 (Bunzel, 1990). There are six times as many African Americans in the United States as Asians; however, in 1988, Asians received twice as many Ph.D.'s as African Americans (The Economist, 1982).

Intellectual diversity cannot be achieved without sufficient representation from all segments of society (Sullivan and Nowlin, 1990). In 1986, African American women received almost 61% of all doctorate degrees awarded to African American candidates (Bunzel, 1990). Colleges and universities find it difficult to keep the promises made about hiring more black faculty. It is possible that the present professional standards will inadvertently continue to keep the number of black faculty appointments disproportionately low (Bunzel, 1990).

The major competitors for employment of prospective African American Ph.D. candidates have been government and industry. These non-Ph.D. fields offer attractive career possibilities and better salaries than universities can offer. The extraordinarily low number of African Americans earning Ph.D.'s, especially in science, are heavily recruited by industry where

they can earn salaries comparable to or slightly less than what they would earn after four to six years of university teaching (Bunzel, 1990). African American Ph.D.'s were more likely to take jobs outside their doctoral field because of more attractive career options, the inability to find jobs in their field, and better salaries (Brown, 1988).

PROBLEMS RETAINING QUALIFIED AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY

Obtaining tenure is a major retention problem for African American faculty. Tenure is based upon published research, teaching performance, and university service. A person could be employed in a tenure track position only to find, when the time is ready for tenure evaluation, that he/she lacks appropriate credentials. These faculty tend to fall short in the published research area because they spend so much of their time serving on faculty committees and acting as role models for black students. When his/her tenure status comes up for review, and the person is hired permanently as an associate professor, tenure is usually awarded. If not, the person is not offered continued employment unless another temporary contract is negotiated (Lessow-Hurley, 1989). Black faculty spend a disproportionate amount of university time on committees, thus cutting deeply into the time they have available for research and creative activity

(Lessow-Hurley, 1989). African American faculty face a difficult dilemma--allotting the majority of their time to research or being the only person of color serving on committees (1989).

Krenzin said, "Black faculty are hardly allowed to work on their own academic pursuits because they are almost forced into service activities that are frequently outside the realm of their expertise. Black administrators and the black students see the role of black faculty as black advocates, student consolers and counselors, and political advisors" (Krenzin, in press). Unfortunately, in university tenure processes, committee and community participation are traditionally not as highly regarded as research and publication. Administrators need to be aware of this problem and to protect underrepresented faculty from situations where they are stretched too thin and then fail to obtain tenure (Lessow-Hurley, 1989). Elmore and Blackburn (1983) contended that blacks were used as showcases in ceremonial functions, used to serve on innumerable committees to guarantee a black presence, and used to give a disproportionately high amount of their time counseling black students.

Additional research shows that African American faculty are usually overburdened by counseling and service assignment since minority students and white faculty rely on black faculty for their points-of-view

as African Americans. Black faculty are seldom viewed as scholars because they are viewed as "specialists" in affirmative action and minority-related issues on white campuses. Many times African Americans have no real knowledge of their employment status. Many universities hire African Americans as lecturers, instructors, or in "soft money" positions. African American faculty assume that they have no real security, few opportunities for advancement, and limited terms of employment and for those African Americans who are appointed to tenure track faculty status, proportionately fewer receive tenure when compared with their Caucasian counterparts (Staples, 1984). In actuality, black faculty could be exploited by not being part of the tenure process (Alali, Ross, and Calhoun, 1990). Longitudinal tracking of minority faculty revealed that black Ph.D.'s had the lowest promotion and tenure rates among minority groups, except promotion to assistant professor rank (Brown, 1988).

Alali, Ross, and Calhoun (1990), in a profile study of black and white faculty from 1979-1983, demonstrated that the percentage of black males receiving tenure dropped in comparison to the percentage of white females receiving all areas of tenure and tenure-track positions. Alali, Ross, and Calhoun stated, "Black males gained only 7 tenured positions in a five year period (1979-1983), while white females gained 59 positions" (1990).

Black males lost 4 tenure-track positions and dropped from 34 to 30 while white females gained 31 tenure track positions which increased the number of white females from 326 to 365.

Alali, Ross, and Calhoun (1990) contend that the tenure track positions appear bleak for black professors in the future. They estimate that blacks will comprise 2.4% of full professors, 3.2% of associate professors, and 4.5% of assistant professors. Their white counterparts will comprise 81.7%, 78.8%, and 81.9% of these positions, respectively.

Krenzin (in press) found black professors are underrepresented. There are fewer tenured black professors, fewer black associate and full professors, and fewer black administrators compared to the group of white male professors and administrators. She notes, "prejudice, acknowledged or not, can be a related factor that influences white faculty to maintain a certain social distance from black faculty. White faculty may be friendly, courteous, and considerate toward black colleagues, but, joint social activities outside of school, collaboration on research, and serious joint exploration of ideas are not normal" (Krenzin, in press).

Blacks employed at predominantly white colleges or universities are expected to have knowledge of and accompanying concern about any matter related to race.

They become a "minority encyclopedia" capable of explaining the black perspective on any campus issue or development (Krenzin, in press).

In conclusion, black and white faculty are more alike than they are different. Black faculty need contact with other black faculty and black students to make the job environment as satisfying as that which white faculty experience.

The literature review pointed toward these factors as possible reasons for the low number of African Americans teaching at the college or university level: (1) a shortage existing in qualified African American faculty due to a low percentage of African Americans receiving doctoral degrees, (2) an inability to maintain appropriate research time in the face of competing cultural obligations that reduced the likelihood of achieving tenure, and (3) the need for a balanced employment atmosphere with peers and with students.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

The researcher uses a quantitative research design. A survey questionnaire was chosen as the instrument to obtain the information needed to answer the questions. A mail-out questionnaire was chosen over the other types of survey methods because it enabled the researcher to have contact with the participants, regardless of where they lived throughout the United States, and because it did not involve any great expense.

The survey population for this research consisted of the 300 members of the Black Caucus of the Speech Communication Association (SCA). This population was chosen because it included communication undergraduates, masters students, doctoral students and doctoral candidates (ABD), part-time and full-time communication teachers, and communication professionals who have worked, taught, or studied in the communication area. They should have a rational perspective on why they chose to teach or chose not to teach and what factors influenced their decision.

In this study a functional design was utilized as a means to discover the causal relationships associated with the respondents' career choices; was naturalistic in that it introduced no experimental stimulus; was a field study because the participants were surveyed in their

homes across the United States; was nonparticipant due to the survey being mailed and completed without any outside interaction with the researcher; was an overt design because the cover letter that accompanied the survey informed the participants of who was surveying them and why; was cross-sectional because it dealt with their present career choices; and was an applied design.

The questionnaire itself consisted of an assortment of questions that would provide a basis for obtaining the data needed. The majority of the questions were closed-ended factual questions about careers and career choices. Others were closed-ended opinion questions, closed-ended factual questions that dealt with demographic data, a ranking question, and an open-ended question that would offer a deeper insight into the responses received. All questions were worded to produce as much interval level data as possible.

A test sample of the questionnaire was distributed to seven African Americans and two Africans in various fields and professions. These professions ranged from college teaching in English, communication, folk studies, and religion to university staff professionals within and outside the communication area. The purpose of the sample test was for the participants to review the questionnaire for the breadth and completeness of question content, the clarity and readability of the structure, and the consistency of the format.

All participants in the pilot test were asked to review the questionnaire and make any changes or suggestions that would enhance the effectiveness of the questionnaire (i.e., was it easy to read, was there any trouble with the wording of the question, etc.). The survey instrument was returned by 7 of the 9 participants. The questions were answered; moreover, the participants offered some enlightening suggestions that made the questionnaire more precise in eliciting the information needed for answering the research questions.

The suggestions and changes were incorporated into the questionnaire, and the survey instrument was printed and mailed to the survey population, 300 members of the Black Caucus of the SCA (see Appendix B). A cover letter stated the source and purpose of the questionnaire, that the respondent's identity would be kept in strict confidence, what was expected from them, along with thanks for their help and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope for their convenience when returning the questionnaires (see Appendix A).

The respondents were asked to answer a 17-item survey questionnaire that identified their basic demographic information; their thoughts about college teaching; the type of college or university (public, private, historically black, predominantly white) they attended to receive their degrees; reasons for making their career choices; some background information on

their parents and their hometown community; and their income. They were also asked about their school and life experiences that influenced their career choices. Upon completion, they were to mail the questionnaire back to the surveyor in the stamped, pre-addressed envelope within a reasonable time frame.

As the questionnaires were returned they were grouped first according to race and then into categories of undergraduate student, master's student, doctoral student, doctoral candidate, part-time college teacher, full-time college teacher, and non-teaching communication professional. A total of 141 of the 300 questionnaires were returned completed. Among the 141 returned questionnaires, 83 of the respondents were African American, 47 Caucasian, 0 Asian/Pacific Islander, 2 Hispanic, 1 Native American, and 8 other.

A statistical analysis software program, SPSS/PC+, was used to analyze the data that was retrieved from the questionnaire. The data was analyzed through a series of frequencies, chi squares, and t-tests.

CHAPTER FOUR:

RESULTS

A questionnaire was mailed to each member of the Black Caucus of the Speech Communication Association. A total of 300 questionnaires was mailed. Of the 300, 47% responded. From the group of respondents, 83 were African American. All reported results in this chapter are taken from the responses of the African American participants.

The majority of the respondents (62.6%) were part-time or full-time college or university teachers; 25.3% of the respondents were doctoral students or doctoral candidates; 7.2% of the respondents were communication professionals; and 4.8% of the respondents were undergraduate and masters students. A total of 97.3% of the respondents have considered college teaching and 90.5% of the respondents were actually teaching college courses, with 90.0% of these respondents teaching communication courses. The majority (44.3%) of the respondents teach at a doctoral degree granting college or university while another 27.1% of the respondents teach at a masters degree granting college or university (see table 4.1).

Other demographic questions provide additional insight into the 83 African American respondents: 75.6%

Table 4.1

WHERE RESPONDENTS ARE TEACHING

College/University	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Two-year community or junior college	10	12.0	14.3
Four-year bachelor's granting	8	9.6	11.4
University master's granting	19	22.9	27.1
University doctoral granting	31	37.3	44.3
Respondents not teaching	<u>15</u>	<u>18.1</u>	<u>missing</u>
	83	100.0	100.0

were female and 24.4% were male; the mean age was 43 years old, the median age was 42 years old, and the modal ages were 32, 42, 43, and 46. Almost half, (49.4%) of the respondents lived over 150 miles from their nearest relative followed by 36.4% living within 50 miles. The majority of the respondents (77.5%) grew up in a two-parent household with only 18.8% growing up in a single-parent household, while 3.8% were raised by other relatives. Respondents tended to grow up in a larger population centers: 29.6% of the respondents grew up in a city with a population of over 500,000 followed by 24.7% growing up in a city with the population between 150,000-500,000 (see table 4.2). Personal incomes varied widely: 42.5% of the respondents had a gross personal income of \$35,000-\$49,999; 17.5% had incomes under \$20,000; another 17.5% had incomes of \$50,000-64,999; 16.3% had incomes between \$20,000-\$34,999; only 6.3% had incomes of more than \$65,000.

Respondents reported that the percentage of their parents who had less than a high school diploma was approximately equal for their mothers (37.5%) and fathers (39.5%). The respondents' fathers were more likely to have completed high school (63.0% vs. 50.0%) than mothers were, but the respondents' mothers were more likely to have completed a bachelor's degree (38.7% vs. 24.7%) or an advanced degree (17.5% vs. 11.1%). See Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

Table 4.2

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENT'S MOTHER

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
8th grade or below	14	16.9	17.5	17.5
9th-12th grade	16	19.3	20.0	37.5
high school graduate	10	12.0	12.5	50.0
some college	9	10.8	11.3	61.3
college graduate	12	14.5	15.0	76.3
some graduate or professional school	5	6.0	6.3	82.5
completed master's degree	12	14.5	15.0	97.5
completed doctoral degree	2	2.4	2.5	100.0
did not respond	3	3.6	Missing	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

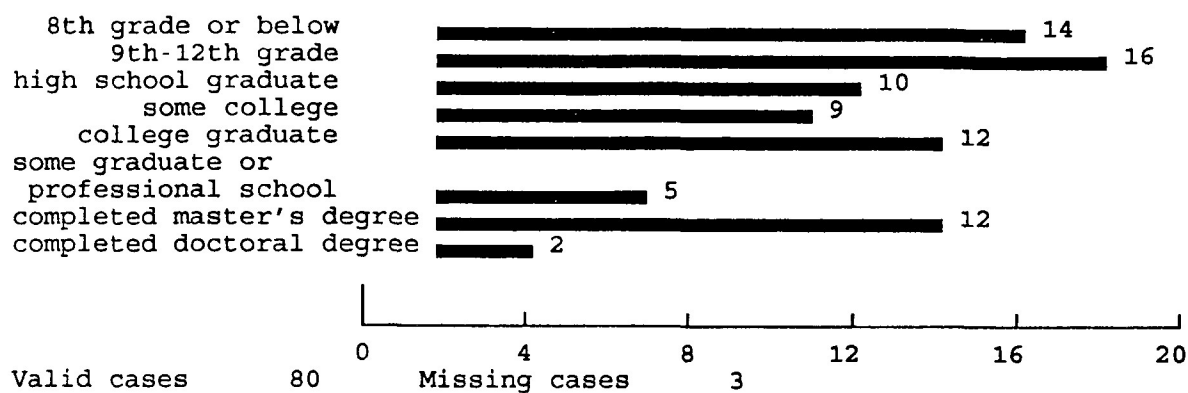
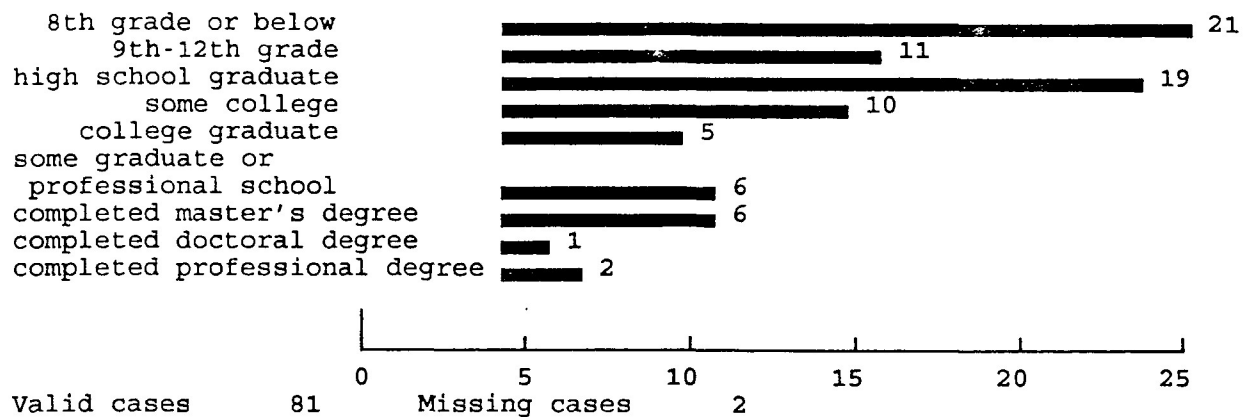


Table 4.3

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENT'S FATHER

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
8th grade or below	21	25.3	25.9	25.9
9th-12th grade	11	13.3	13.6	39.5
high school graduate	19	22.9	23.5	63.0
some college	10	12.0	12.3	75.3
college graduate	5	6.0	6.2	81.5
some graduate or professional school	6	7.2	7.4	88.9
completed master's degree	6	7.2	7.4	96.3
completed doctoral degree	1	1.2	1.2	97.5
completed professional degree	2	2.4	2.5	100.0
did not respond	<u>2</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>Missing</u>	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	



The majority of the respondents (65.8%) attended a public undergraduate college or university versus a private undergraduate college or university, with 71.8% attending a predominantly white college or university rather than a historically black college or university. For their graduate education, 76.6% attended a public college or university versus 23.4% who attended a private college or university, with 96.1% attending a predominantly white college or university versus the 3.9% who attended a historically black college or university. For their doctoral degree, 85.3% of the respondents attended a public college or university versus the 14.7% who attended a private college or university, with 88.6% attending a predominantly white college or university versus the 11.8% who attended a historically black college or university (See Tables 4.4 and 4.5).

Approximately 90% of the respondents chose teaching as a career. A scale measuring the importance of influences on career choice was created by asking respondents to rank five factors that influenced their career choice. Interest in or knowledge of the field was ranked the most important factor that influenced their career choice (average ranking at 1.450 with maximum of 1.0 and minimum of 5.0); job security (2.871) was the second most important factor to influence their career choice; social interaction with their peers (3.340) ranked third; financial benefits (3.516) and prestige (4.034)

Table 4.4

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ATTENDED, PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
public	50	60.2	65.8
private	26	31.3	34.2
did not respond	7	8.4	missing

MASTER'S DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
public	59	71.1	76.6
private	18	21.7	23.4
did not respond	6	7.2	missing

DOCTORAL DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
public	58	69.9	85.3
private	10	12.0	14.7
did not respond	15	18.1	missing

Table 4.5

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ATTENDED, BLACK VS. WHITE

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
historically black	20	24.1	26.3
predominantly white	56	67.5	73.7
did not respond	7	8.4	missing

MASTER'S DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
historically black	3	3.6	3.9
predominantly white	74	89.2	96.1
did not respond	6	7.2	missing

DOCTORAL DEGREE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
historically black	8	9.6	11.4
predominantly white	62	74.7	88.6
did not respond	13	15.7	missing

ranked fourth and fifth as factors that influenced their career decision. For a more detailed breakdown of the ranking of these factors see Tables 4.6 to 4.10.

A series of t-tests was used to analyze and compare the respondents' responses to the factors that influenced their career decision. Of the ten possible comparisons, six were statistically significant; all six exceeded the $p=.001$ levels (see Table 4.11). The respondents ranked interest/knowledge of the field the most influential factor in their career choice, higher than financial benefits, job security/tenure, social interaction with their peers, or prestige. Job security/tenure ranked higher than prestige or financial benefits.

Approximately one-fifth of the respondents (20.45%) mentioned at least one additional factor in their decision. The most frequently mentioned additional factors were flexible hours (4.8%), the social and political significance of the profession (3.6%), pleasure in teaching (3.6%), and appeal of the academic lifestyle (2.4%). See Table 4.12.

In order to get a sense of how the respondents felt about their own experiences in education, they were asked to identify their most favorite educational memories regardless of the school level (i.e., elementary to graduate school). Of these favorite experiences, 44.2% of the respondents felt that undergraduate college held their

Table 4.6

IMPORTANCE OF JOB SECURITY/TENURE
AS A FACTOR IN CAREER CHOICE

Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
most important	8	9.6	12.9	12.9
second most important	18	21.7	29.0	41.9
third most important	19	22.9	30.6	72.6
fourth most important	10	12.0	16.1	88.7
fifth most important	5	6.0	8.1	96.8
least important	2	2.4	3.2	100.0
did not respond	<u>21</u>	<u>25.3</u>	<u>missing</u>	
	83	100.0	100.0	

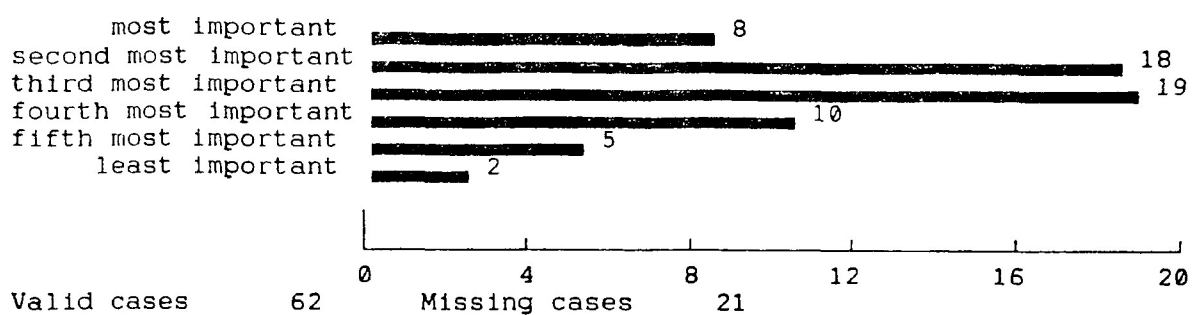


Table 4.7

IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL BENEFITS
AS A FACTOR IN CAREER CHOICE

Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Comulative Percent
most important	3	3.6	4.8	4.8
second most important	12	14.5	19.4	24.2
third most important	13	15.7	21.0	45.2
fourth most important	19	22.9	30.6	75.8
fifth most important	14	16.9	22.6	98.4
least important	1	1.2	1.6	100.0
did not respond	<u>21</u>	<u>25.3</u>	<u>missing</u>	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

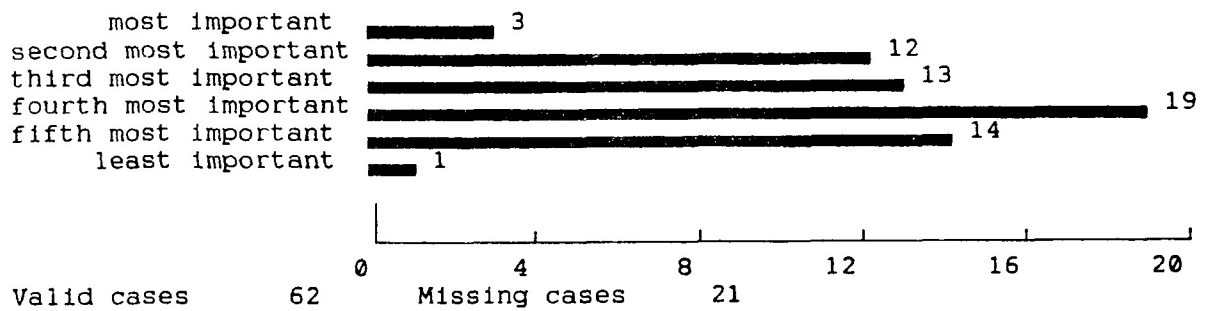


Table 4.8

INTEREST IN AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIELD
AS A FACTOR IN CAREER CHOICE

Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
most important	55	66.3	75.3	75.3
second most important	7	8.4	9.6	84.9
third most important	7	8.4	9.6	94.5
fourth most important	4	4.8	5.5	100.0
did not respond	<u>10</u>	<u>12.0</u>	<u>missing</u>	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

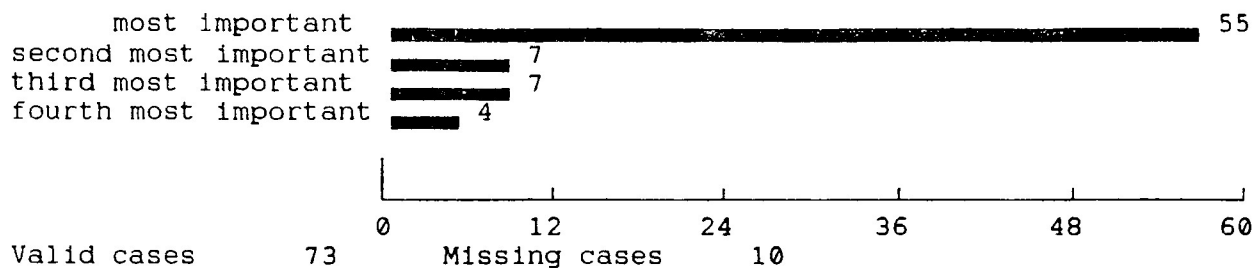


Table 4.9

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH PEERS
AS A FACTOR IN CAREER CHOICE

Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
most important	1	1.2	1.7	1.7
second most important	19	22.9	32.8	34.5
third most important	10	12.0	17.2	51.7
fourth most important	16	19.3	27.6	79.3
fifth most important	11	13.3	19.0	98.3
least important	1	1.2	1.7	100.0
did not respond	<u>25</u>	<u>30.1</u>	<u>missing</u>	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

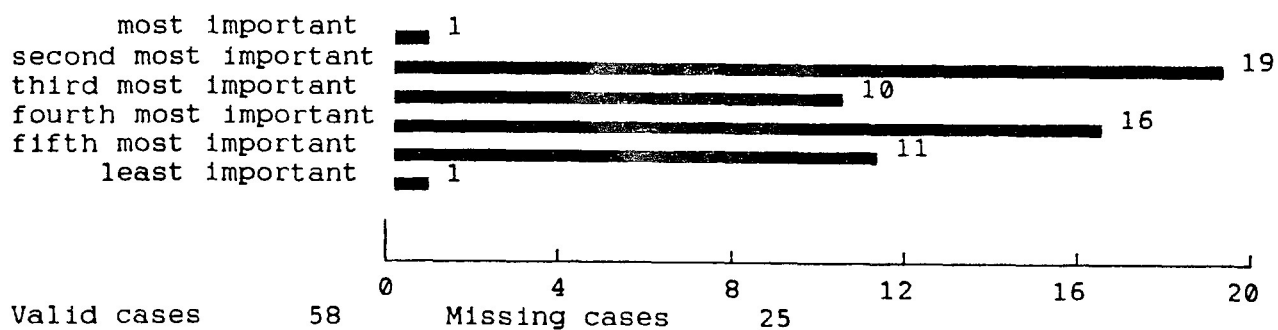


Table 4.10

IMPORTANCE OF PRESTIGE
AS A FACTOR IN CAREER CHOICE

Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
most important	2	2.4	3.4	3.4
second most important	5	6.0	8.5	11.9
third most important	13	15.7	22.0	33.9
fourth most important	10	12.0	16.9	50.8
fifth most important	27	32.5	45.8	96.6
least important	2	2.4	3.4	100.0
did not respond	<u>24</u>	<u>28.9</u>	<u>missing</u>	
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

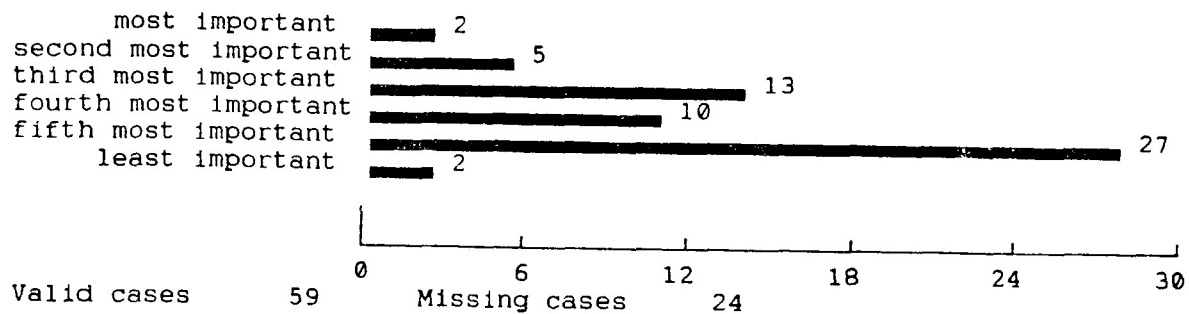


Table 4.11

T-TEST ANALYSES OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE
OF FACTORS IN CAREER CHOICE

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	*Significance
Job Security/Tenure	2.8793	1.285	p=.000
Prestige	4.05	1.220	
Interest/Knowledge of the Field	1.5246	.942	p=.000
Financial Benefits	3.5410	1.219	
Job Security/Tenure	2.8983	1.282	p=.000
Financial Benefits	3.5932	1.205	
Interest/Knowledge of the field	1.5000	.919	p=.000
Job Security/Tenure	2.8710	1.261	
Interest/Knowledge of the Field	1.4912	.928	p=.000
Social Interaction with Peers	3.3860	1.192	
Interest/Knowledge of the Field	1.4915	.917	p=.000
Prestige	4.0339	1.217	

*Means were significantly different at $p = < .001$.

Table 4.12

OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS THAT
INFLUENCED CAREER CHOICES

Factors	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Social/political Significance	3	3.6	17.6
Flexible hours	4	4.8	23.5
Job availability	1	1.2	5.9
Pleasure in teaching	3	3.6	17.6
Academic lifestyle	2	2.4	11.8
Service	1	1.2	5.9
Strong affirmity for teaching	1	1.2	5.9
Departmental autonomy	1	1.2	5.9
Students welfare	1	1.2	5.9
Did not respond	66	79.5	missing

favorite experiences; 23.4% felt that graduate college held their favorite experiences; 20.8% felt that high school held their favorite experiences; 11.7% felt that elementary school and middle school held their favorite experiences.

When asked whether any teachers had influenced their career choice, 82.5% of the respondents felt that their teachers had influenced their current career choice while 17.5% felt that the teachers had not influenced their career choice. The majority (92.5%) felt that their teachers' influence was positive compared to only 7.5% who felt that the influence received from their teachers was both positive and negative.

When asked in an open-ended question to describe any important experiences which influenced their career choice, 24 of the 83 respondents mentioned encouragement from their family, from teachers, or from both family and teachers. Nine mentioned being influenced by experiences in their classwork while 15 mentioned life experiences outside the classroom. Eleven mentioned influence from role models or mentors. Four mentioned dislike of the business or corporate world, and three considered their career choice a "special calling." See Table 4.13 for a summary of these categories. See Appendix C for verbatim answers.

Not all respondents answered yes when asked if they had considered college teaching. The respondents who

Table 4.13

OTHER EXPERIENCES THAT INFLUENCED
CAREER CHOICES

Experiences	Frequency
Encouragement from family	6
Encouragement from teachers	14
Encouragement from both	4
Influenced by classwork	9
Influenced by life experiences	15
Influenced by role models	8
Influenced by mentors	3
Considered a "special calling"	3
Unprepared for the business world	7
Dislike for the corporate setting	3

stated that they had not considered college teaching felt that the low pay, the slow advancement, and the low number of African American faculty already teaching influenced their decision not to teach. These respondents also stated that other factors, such as no support and politics within their departments, greatly influenced their decision not to teach on a college or university level. All respondents agreed that their communication background helped them to obtain their current career position. These respondents felt that if the opportunity presented itself, they would be willing to consider changing their present career to teach communication courses at a college or university.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Subquestion A: Were the respondents' career choice factors social, economic, occupational, cultural, demographic, or financial?

The research results showed that a combination of social, economic, occupational, cultural, demographic, and financial factors influenced the respondents' career choices. Occupational and economic factors--interest in or knowledge of the field and job security/tenure--were considered most important by the respondents.

Subquestion B: What effect does family structure, parental education level, and community have on the respondents' career choice?

The majority of the respondents grew up in a two-parent household although nearly one-fifth grew up in a single-parent household. The respondents' responses showed that more mothers progressed at a slow and steady rate resulting in a completion of a bachelor's degree and/or an advanced degree. The respondents' fathers tended to slow down resulting in fewer college degrees. The majority of the respondents grew up in a city with a population of over 500,000 people. There were three times as many female respondents than male respondents corroborating that African American women are more likely to earn times as many college degrees as African American men.

Subquestion C: What effect did the respondents' experiences in formal education have on their career choice?

Many of the respondents felt that their experiences with their African American teachers, at all levels, were very influential in their career choices. They expressed the willingness of their teachers to "go beyond the realm of duty," especially African American women teachers, to make sure that they learned what was needed. The

respondents also revealed that there is a need to cultivate the minds of African American youth in today's society, and that need was a very influential factor in their career choice. In response to an open-ended question 70% of the respondents stated that they were influenced by their teachers; 60% of the 70% stated that they were directly influenced by African American teachers; 20% stated they were influenced by both African American and Caucasian teachers; while 5% were influenced by Caucasian teachers only. Some respondents went as far as mentioning the names of the people who had influenced them. One respondent stated that she was directly influenced by Dr. Sandra Rackley from Florida State University. This respondent said, "Dr. Sandra Rackley was a dynamic role model and a great asset to the field. By her example, I was so inspired." Another respondent stated that Dr. Sidney Ribeau, in an Intentional Rhetorical Discourse class, changed her thinking about the role language plays in a society and how language reveals the hegemonic dimensions of power.

Subquestion D: What effect did the life experiences of the respondents have on their career choice?

Many of the respondents made their career choices because of one or more of the following experiences: racism and sexism they had experienced; flexible hours for single

parents with small children and for people who are handicapped; the derogatory and negative images that television reflects of African Americans which influences our African American youth; family members who are already in the education field; working in the "real world"; being dissatisfied in the "real world"; and the availability of job opportunities in teaching for African Americans over the age of 40.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DISCUSSION

In today's society, African American faculty are desperately needed to provide role models and mentors to African American students, to comply with Affirmative Action requirements, and to provide cultural diversity to the faculty and the students. Before this research it was generally thought, by the researcher, that African Americans chose their careers not only for financial reasons or for the prestige or status of the position but also for the social attributes that were available to them. The researcher believed that those African Americans who are teaching basically teach because of the security that college teaching offered, and those who are not teaching chose not to do so because of the financial benefits that the private sector has to offer. How are African American communication majors making their career choices? What are the factors that greatly influence them?

There are not enough qualified African Americans getting Ph.D.'s. Many of the qualified ones were hired by colleges that can offer better benefits, better pay, and more challenges. The general rule (unspoken) is to engage the best.

Then why are African American faculty hard to find? A very low percentage of African Americans currently teach at colleges or universities. There are many reasons for this low number: (1) very few African American communication majors are getting doctoral degrees; (2) many feel they have a better financial future in the employ of governmental agencies or industry; (3) problems in retaining African American faculty due to slow promotion rates; (4) problems in obtaining tenure or tenure-track positions; (5) not researching or recruiting effectively; (6) cultural factors; and (7) falling short by dealing reactively rather than reacting proactively, just to name a few.

Thernstrom (1991) described a situation in a New York school district to show that a role model (teacher) does not necessarily have to be the same race as the student. Thernstrom's example dealt with high school, but is college any different? There is an assumption that using only role models or mentors that are of the same race as the students is far more beneficial to the student. The role models fill the positions of personal confidant, cultural advisors, substitute parents away from home, just to name a few. Some researchers, such as Thernstrom, find this statement to be a contradiction. However, the results of the present research revealed that the majority of the

respondents stated they were influenced by African American role models or mentors in their lives. Although there is some difference of opinion on this matter, African American students need encouragement and support from other African Americans.

Approximately 70% of the African Americans who responded to the survey specified that their role models or mentors were African American; almost 25% of the respondents stated that both African American and Caucasian role models or mentors offered encouragement or support; 5% acknowledged that their support or encouragement came from only Caucasian role models or mentors.

Only 58.8% of those who responded to the survey were African American. It was interesting to find that the survey population, the Black Caucus of the Speech Communication Association, has a membership of 300 members; of these 300 members, it is estimated that at least one-fifth, and perhaps as many as two-fifths, of them are not African American. The Speech Communication Association has a membership of 6,000 members including the Black Caucus. African Americans constitute 3% to 4% of the entire association. This percentage seems to be an appropriate representation of blacks teaching on college or university campuses.

The results of this study revealed that the majority of the respondents came from two-parent households--which was somewhat surprising in this age where single parents are more prevalent. The study seems to indicate that being from a two-parent household increases the likelihood of success in college and thereby increases the likelihood of African American students' choosing college teaching as a career. The study results also revealed that the respondents' mothers tended to have higher educational degrees than the fathers--which again was a surprising factor. The research did show that the type of college or university, historically black or predominantly white, a person attended had no effect on his or her career choice. The respondents who chose college teaching as a career were influenced primarily by college teachers and not by the type of institution they attended.

The research showed that when the participants made their career choice, their interest in or knowledge of their field was far more important than job security/tenure, than financial benefits, than social interaction with their peers, and than prestige. These factors were all valid career considerations, but they did not weight heavily on the respondents' decision to choose their career.

Based upon the review of the literature and the researcher's personal experience, African American students need positive role models and mentors. If

there are none of the same race available, it is important that these particular roles be filled by positive people, regardless of race.

It is evident that there is a gap in the research literature to support exclusively that role models or mentors should be of the same race as the student. However, this study provides evidence that these role models or mentors need to be of the same race. Quality comes from quantity. The higher the number of African American role models or mentors accessible to the students, the more one-on-one relationships between the role model or mentor and the student could be established. If the number continues to remain low, the role model or mentor will not be able to provide adequate encouragement, guidance, or leadership due to time constraints. Many of those students who are influenced by the role models or mentors may go on to complete their Ph.D.s and, in turn, be role models to other students.

Role models and mentors (positive or negative ones) have a strong influence on the life of a college student. African American college students are no different. It is important for African American students to feel included and accepted throughout their college years. College teachers should cultivate a student/mentor relationship with African American students when they see that the student has a devoted

interest in the field. This interest could possibly be nurtured to develop into an interest in college teaching.

Bibliography

- Alali, A. O., Ross, J. L. and Calhoun G. (1990). Black professors in higher education: a vanishing breed? College Student Journal, 23, 328-31.
- Allen, W. (1992). The color of success: African American college student outcomes at predominately white and historically black public colleges and universities. Harvard Educational Review, 62, 26-44.
- Brown, R. H. (1993). School enrollment and educational attainment by race and Hispanic origin: 1990. (1990 CP-2-19). 1990 Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics, Kentucky, 85.
- Brown, R. H. (1993). Age, fertility and household, and family composition of black persons: 1990. (1990 CP-2-19). 1990 Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics, Kentucky, 95.
- Brown, S. V. (1988). Increasing minority faculty: an elusive goal (Research Report 5402019) Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service (Minority Graduate Education Project).
- Bunzel, J. H. (1990). Minority faculty hiring. The American Scholar, 59, pp. 39-52.
- Cochran, C. University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky. (personal communication, November 1993).

- Elmore, C. J., Blackburn, R. T. (1983). Black and white in white research universities. Journal of Higher Education, 54, pp. 1-12.
- Exum, W. H., Menges, R. J., Watkins, B., and Berglund, P. (1984). Making it at the top: women and minority faculty in the academic labor market. American Behavioral Scientist, 27, pp. 307-321.
- Foe, J. Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky. (personal communication, December 1993).
- Hocker, C. (1991). In search of black faculty. Black Enterprise, 21, pp. 70-76.
- Krenzin, J. L. (in press). Factors influencing the retention of black faculty on predominately white campuses. Research in Ethnic Relations.
- Krenzin, J. L. (personal communication, November 1993).
- Lessow-Hurley, J. (1989). Recruitment and retention of minority faculty: affirmative action strategies. CUPA Journal, pp. 22-26.
- Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky (personal communication, October 1993).
- Niles, L. (personal communication, October 1993).
- Rodgers, R. P. (personal communication, October 1993).
- Speech Communication Association (personal communication, July 1994)
- Staff. (1990). Role models. The Economist, 315, p.26.
- Staples, R. (1984). Racial ideology and intellectual racism: Blacks in academia. The Black Scholar. 2-17.

Thernstrom, A. (1991). Beyond the pale: the limits of racial role models. The New Republic, 205, 22-24.

Wagener. U. (1991). How to increase the number of minority Ph.D.s. Planning for Higher Education. 4, 1,8.

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER FOR SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

508 E. College Street
Glasgow, Kentucky 42141
January 18, 1994

Dear Participant:

My name is Carrie Thornton. I am a graduate student at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. I am completing my thesis which focuses on the small number of African Americans teaching communication courses at the college level. Dr. Lyndrey Niles, head of the Speech Communication Association Black Caucus, and Dr. R. Pierre Rodgers, Newsletter Editor, provided the mailing list of the SCA Black Caucus to use for this study. Your name was selected from that list.

Here is where I need your help. I am asking you to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the stamped, pre-addressed envelope as soon as possible. The questionnaire consists of questions pertaining to your reasons for choosing your career, as well as some background information. Please answer the questionnaire as openly as possible. The information obtained from the questionnaire will be used strictly for thesis research and will be handled in an entirely confidential manner.

Please take the next few minutes and complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me. Time is of the essence. I greatly appreciate your helping me with my thesis research. Thank You.

Yours truly,

Carrie Thornton

/ct

Enclosures

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which of the following best describes you?

- ☐ undergraduate student)
☐ master's student)

☐ doctoral student)
☐ doctoral candidate (ABD))
☐ part-time college or university teacher)
☐ full-time college or university teacher)
☐ communication professional (non-academic))
 ☐ manufacturing ☐ politics
 ☐ public service ☐ management
 ☐ television ☐ banking
 ☐ sales ☐ retail
 ☐ other _____

Are you considering teaching college when you graduate?

- ☐ strongly ☐ slightly ☐ not

skip to question #5

2. Have you considered college teaching as a career choice?

☐ YES



☐ NO



Are you teaching at a college/ university?

- ☐ yes ☐ no *skip to #3*

Are you teaching communication courses?

- ☐ yes ☐ no

What areas of communication do you regularly teach? (*check all that apply*)

- ☐ speech/rhetoric
☐ interpersonal communication
☐ organizational communication
☐ broadcasting
☐ mass communication
☐ other _____

Where do you teach?

- ☐ two year community or junior college
☐ four year college (bachelor's degree)
☐ university (master's degree granting)
☐ university (doctoral degree granting)

How long have you been teaching college (after graduate school)?

_____ years

Do you have tenure?

- ☐ yes ☐ no

Did any of the following factors influence your decision not to teach? (*check all that apply*)

- ☐ low pay
☐ slow advancement
☐ low number of Black faculty
☐ little job security
☐ limited social prospects
☐ other _____

How helpful was your communication background in obtaining your current career position?

- ☐ very ☐ somewhat ☐ not

How willing would you be to change your career to teach communication courses on the college level if the opportunity to teach were presented to you?

- ☐ very willing
☐ somewhat willing
☐ neutral or undecided
☐ somewhat unwilling
☐ very unwilling

continue to question #3

3. Please rank in the order of importance the following factors which may have influenced your career decision: (1=most important; 2=second most important, etc.)
- job security/tenure
 financial benefits
 interest in and knowledge of the field
 social interaction with peers
 prestige
 other _____
4. How close is your job to your nearest relative?
- ☐ within 50 miles
☐ 50-100 miles
☐ 100-150 miles
☐ over 150 miles
5. What kind of college/university did you attend to receive your undergraduate degree? *(check one answer in each column)*
- ☐ public ☐ historically Black college/university
☐ private ☐ predominantly White college/university
6. What kind of college/university did you attend to receive your master's degree? *(check one answer in each column)*
- ☐ public ☐ historically Black college/university ☐ did not attend/ have not
☐ private ☐ predominantly White college/university yet attended
7. What kind of college/university did you attend to receive your doctoral degree? *(check one answer in each column)*
- ☐ public ☐ historically Black college/university ☐ did not attend/ have not
☐ private ☐ predominantly White college/university yet attended
8. Which of the following best describes you?
- ☐ African American
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ Caucasian
☐ Hispanic
☐ Native American
☐ Other _____

continue to question #9


9. What is your gender?
☐ male ☐ female
10. In what year were you born? 19_____
11. What is the population of the area where you were raised?
☐ rural area
☐ town under 10,000
☐ city 10,000-50,000
☐ city 50,000-150,000
☐ city 150,000-500,000
☐ city over 500,000
12. Did you grow up in a
☐ two-parent household
☐ single-parent household
☐ other _____
13. What is the highest education level of your parent(s)?
- | Mother | Father |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8th grade or below | <input type="checkbox"/> 8th grade or below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9th-12th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> 9th-12th grade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> high school graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> high school graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> some college | <input type="checkbox"/> some college |
| <input type="checkbox"/> college graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> college graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> some graduate or professional school | <input type="checkbox"/> some graduate or professional school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> completed master's degree | <input type="checkbox"/> completed master's degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> completed doctoral degree | <input type="checkbox"/> completed doctoral degree |
14. Which category best fits your gross personal annual income (before taxes, not including income from other household members)?
☐ under \$20,000
☐ \$20,000-\$34,999
☐ \$35,000-\$49,999
☐ \$50,000-\$64,999
☐ \$65,000 and over

continue to question #15

15. Of all your school experiences, which would you say holds your favorite memories of education?

- ☐ elementary school
- ☐ middle school
- ☐ high school
- ☐ undergraduate college
- ☐ graduate school

16. Of these experiences, did you have any teachers who may have influenced your current career choice?

- ☐ yes  ☐ no *continue to question #17*

Was this influence a positive or a negative experience?

- ☐ positive ☐ negative

17. Please briefly describe any important experience(s) which influenced your career choice?

Thank you for providing this information. Your help is greatly appreciated.
Please return in the enclosed stamped, pre-addressed envelope.

APPENDIX C

VERBATIM RESPONSES FOR QUESTION #17

RESPONSES TO QUESTION #17 FROM THE 83 AFRICAN AMERICAN RESPONDENTS: "PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE ANY IMPORTANT EXPERIENCE(S) WHICH INFLUENCED YOUR CAREER CHOICE?"

- 001: My decision to teach arose mostly from a rejection of the warped, profit-motivated values of the business world--where I spent the first 20 years of my working career.
- 002: I had excellent role models in the teachers I've had throughout my education experience, but the most influential teachers were black women. Their willingness to extend themselves well beyond the scope of the "jobs" had a lasting impact on the importance that a teacher's level of commitment has in shaping the lives of students. I also came from a long live of educators, many of whom taught in the Atlanta University system. The commitment of education has quite a history in my family.
- 003: Learning the importance of qualitative research--including oral narratives and story telling as an art. My mentor, Dr. Theresa Carilli.
- 004: My parents and grandparents valued education and passed on a love of learning to me. Consequently, I'm in grad school because it's something I've always wanted to do. I'm a GTA.
- 005: Having received my Masters in Public Admin and having worked in N.Y. state gov. I realized that the need to participate in the development of young Black minds.
- 006: My sophomore year in undergraduate, I did a speech about the need for my undergraduate institution to have more minority faculty (especially African American). My advisor asked me if I ever thought about pursuing my doctorate and coming back there to teach.
- 007: no response
- 008: An expressed interest by the teacher to inspire me (as an individual) to accomplish great achievements.
- 009: I found myself responsible for a young son and I had no marketable skills.
- 010: My mother & brother
- 011: Having a mentor guide me and inspire me
- 012: no response
- 013: Mother encouraged Ph.D. degrees for her children

Experiences (positive) from my African Amer. professors were of the most use to me academically
 My undergraduate experience working in students org'n's. taught me just as much as the academics in terms of how to focus, work a project through to its end and how to strategize with and around certain barriers.

014: no response

015: I had teachers who took time with me and told me that I could succeed.

016: I chose Communication Studies as an area of graduate study, because of a consciousness-raising class. I had with Dr. Sidney Ribeau (California). The course was Intentional Rhetorical Discourse. It changed my thinking about the role language plays in a society and how language reveals the hegemonic dimensions of power.

017: I am good at explaining concepts to other people. Black people typically value Black teachers—at least, this is true in the case of my family and associates.

018: Personal counseling with the speech coach.

019: no response

020: Faculty support/encouragement at the Master's level to continue for the terminal degree.
 Faculty (Master's level) continued contact while in doctoral prog.
 Family (parental & spousal) positive attitude Re: my abilities to make a difference in my student's lives.

021: The pursuit of higher education was influenced by middle school teachers. However, my current career choice was influenced by my own work with young children which prompted a general interest in communication acquisition and influences on commun.

022: A female faculty member (a recent Ph.D.) took an interest in me & encouraged me to attend grad school—I did 8 years later after I got my B.A. She (a white woman) was the first & only encouragement I got as an undergrad.

023: Actually I had both types (+,-) of experiences. I wanted to be a presence on a predominantly white campus, because as an undergraduate this lack affected me negatively. I did have a good

experience at the masters level, because two professors served as mentors and encouraged me to apply to doctoral programs.

- 024: When I began the masters program, I worked as a teaching assistant. That experience helped me decide that I wanted to have a career as a professor.
- 025: At the elementary level, instructors made me feel special by rewarding me for academic performance with words of encouragement and grouping me with other gifted children. In undergraduate and graduate school professors such as Sidney Ribeau, Mary Jane Collier, and Margaret Fereveger & Keith Hennings encouraged me and supported me in my academic endeavors.
- 026: I have also taught college basic communication while in my Ph.D. program.
- 027: In graduate school I was surrounded by excellent role models who supported, encouraged, and motivated me to do my best. They were the "wind beneath my wings."
- 028: no response
- 029: no response
- 030: no response
- 031: Winning a statewide Oratorical Contest in high school -- enjoying backstage productions of plays in high school
- 032: (1) strong college teachers as role models in Oral Interpretation (2) high school teacher who said I wasn't an actress; this steered me toward the academy rather than a professional career as a performer
- 033: Dedication and professional commitment of my teachers and their willingness to attempt to meet my individual academic, social, and professional needs.
- 034: no response
- 035: no response
- 036: no response
- 037: no response
- 038: no response

- 039: no response
- 040: no response
- 041: no response
- 042: Encouragement from family and teachers in high school.
- 043: No particular experience; just an orientation to social responsibility. To give back some of what I received and to participate in the creation of the society's intelligence & interest.
- 044: Teaching as a graduate assistant
- 045: As an undergraduate I took a course in Intercultural Comm. and finally found an area in Speech that I could identify with. As a multiracial woman growing up in California I wanted to relate my experiences to what I was studying and after talking this course taught by Gale Arletta Scholder I connected to what I had felt all along that this field needed to include the experiences of the "other" in the research. By the way after the mentoring I received from Gale, I decided to go to graduate school and do something about the void in racial/ethnic/cultural voices.
- 046: Lack of erroneous info on Native Americans & African Americans history, art, culture, etc. Their contribution to our society.
- 047: I fell into teaching by going to a teachers' college in 1958. Since 1963 I've taught at all levels. The subjects of English, drama, and communication and the challenges of teaching have kept me interested.
- 048: no response
- 049: Hated the drama teacher in a drama/speech program so turned to speech. Loved Kenneth Burke
- 050: (1) recognizing that I enjoyed other campus experiences (2) recognizing that being a college instructor was not beyond my own capabilities (3) father's experience as an educator.
- 051: One or two instructors who were committed to providing a quality graduate education.
- 052: This may sound strange, but I sincerely believe I have been "called" to teach as much as any minister has been "called" to be a minister. Experiences in each of the schools in #15 above helped me to love

public speaking and helped me to know that I wanted to teach others to become effective public speakers. Even after my 28 years in the college classroom, I get as excited about each day's class each day as I did during the first year of teaching --- I love teaching public speaking and any speech communications course!

053: no response

054: no response

055: no response

056: I always assumed I would teach. Don't know when or how this occurred.

057: (1) I was seen debating in high school, and offered a scholarship: the result, a speech major (2) I went on a junior year abroad program to India: results, intercultural comm.

058: Simply observing people like John Brisbain an impossibly excellent teacher of history at Lansing Eastern HS who loved to teach so much it come out of every pore of the man.

059: One opportunity to be able to work in a career where, as a woman, I could be hired after age 40.

060: no response

061: In my senior year of college, I interned under a speech communication professor. She allowed me to teach several sessions of the basic public teaching course. I felt immediately at home & decided to pursue higher education & a career in academics!

062: no response

063: During my student teaching in a senior high school, one troubled boy gave me his senior picture and wrote on the back that he knew he would not have graduated without my support. I knew I had made a difference and wanted to go on making a difference. I thank God I have meaningful work that helps to make the world a better place.

064: Professors who were role models --- especially having some women instructors when I was an undergraduate.

065 Profs taking time & interest in me & my work. This made all the Difference!!

- 066: High school debate coach
Lack of employment after B.A.
- 067: Experiences teaching as grad. teaching fellow.
- 068: I made my choices based on parents & teachers low expectations of me. First I went to nursing school, then secretarial school & worked as both a nurse & secretary for several years. Then I went to college & grad school & put myself through with a variety of jobs. I discovered I wasn't retarded & a lot of time & a few teachers along the way (after college) encouraged me to go on. I was labeled retarded in grade school. This was perhaps one of the most profound experiences which influenced me. I also had a family that put priority on sons. Girls were for breeding & housekeeping. Leaving this legacy behind took many years. I'm glad I did leave it. There were far too many experiences to list which influenced my career choice.
- 069: no response
- 070: no response
- 071: no response
- 072: Sexism by male science professors discouraged me from my first love -- microbiology!! Positive encouragement & interest came by Bruce Lather led me to speech.
- 073: Professors deeply committed to the field of speech communication.
- 074: Actually, I did not plan to go into teaching. I decided to get a Ph.D. because I wanted to be close to my (then) significant other who was in college at a school near the university I attended for my doctorate.
- 075: no response
- 076: I had previously taught elementary and high school. I knew I loved teaching. So after graduate school, I tried college and loved it even more. Student appreciation and subsequent achievements are the greatest rewards.
- 077: I grew up in Greensboro, N.C., site of two traditionally Black colleges and knew many professors & administrators. Their lifestyle and accomplishments influenced my choice. As an undergraduate, I was encouraged to pursue graduate study by several professors. My first job (at a traditionally Black university) was a wonderful

experience, and many colleagues encouraged me to pursue the doctorate so that I could be a scholar as well as a teacher & influence what is taught in comm. classes by what I write.

- 078: All my teachers were supportive & encouraging. I wanted to be like them. They had the respect of the entire Black & White community. I wanted that. I wanted to help young people succeed & learn. I was encouraged to do so by my teachers in high school & college. They were ALL BLACK. I was never told that I could not do it. It was virtually expected that I would have a Ph.D. before I was 30 & I did. I suppose my experiences as a child tutoring other children & helping in the library (public black) brought me the kind of satisfaction I needed & wanted that it followed me through college. I made my decision in the 8th grade to be a college professor.
- 079: no response
- 080: Positive experiences throughout school years.
- 081: Working and coming to realize communication was central to so much of what we did as people.
- 082: no response
- 083: I came from a family of teachers. I knew that I would be a teacher, too.
- 084: My 5th grade teacher. She was a Black female in segregated school. She was polished, professional, business like. I wanted to be like her. I didn't decide to teach speech until my freshman year in college. Before that I had not considered teaching. But all the significant role models in my childhood were black educators in the classroom or black extension agents who worked in the community.
- 085: I wanted to have a career that I could always fall back on in times of trouble. They cannot take the various job opportunities always in education. I know I can always get a job.
- 086: When I started student teaching I realized that I had a "calling" or a gift for teaching. I was able to reach my students and I loved turning light bulbs on!
- 087: no response
- 088: I was quite dissatisfied w/employment in the Federal Government (Soc Security Admin) after receiving my

B.A. degree in Speech Comm., so I returned to school for another degree and found the opportunity to teach, a career infinitely more rewarding. I also was tracked into the Ph.D. program I completed; actually I went to increase my prestige and income.

089: Attending a historically Black college was the best thing that ever happened to me. A faculty member at my undergraduate college took time to talk to me about career choices. As a result of his encouragement, I learned that I had the potential to pursue a professional career this contact increased my self esteem tremendously.

090: My B.S. degree is in Speech Pathology & Audiology. I wanted to be able to help individuals in expressing their needs, thoughts & feelings. I believe that being able to share & express myself was a primal need.

091: no response

092: I don't recall any specific influence or experience. I have always had an affinity for the school "milieu." I suspect I favored teaching to continue involvement in the educational sphere. English was my favorite school subject & included exposure to related areas such as theater, speech communication.

093: no response

094: Many of the things in my life influenced my career choice. There is no one event or two.

095: Career day at high school, elementary school classmate, prayer (I believe God should be a part of all decisions.)

096: no response

097: Attending Shaw University and having Horace & Patrick Caple as professors and mentors; observing my brother as he taught at Texas College; my father's counsel.

098: As a junior Speech Communication major, I really had other plans other than finishing my coursework & getting a degree -- and then "working in the real world," but a professor took me aside and urged me to apply to graduate school. Once I took his advice, applied, and enrolled in a Master's program, I realized that this is what I wanted to do -- to be a teacher and writer-scholar.

099: Having been a student in a fourth grade class taught by my mother.

- 100: Most of my family members are/were in education. My introductory speech classes most influenced my choice of career.
- 101: At Grambling State University, all of my teachers were good. Somehow I gravitated toward speech/drama/English education because I wanted to be an I became the next best thing -- a teacher. My speech/drama/English teachers were marvelous; however, I do remember immensely Dr. Lloyd Sordle and Dr. Wilson who really helped me select an undergraduate major. In post graduate school, I have fond memories of Dr. Sondra Rachley (FSU) who helped me in every way she could. We remain friends today!!
- 102: No specific experience but several in general. Just knowing I was expected by my friends & family to do well and to finish whatever I started.
- 103: My Business and Professional Speaking Professor impressed me so much as an instructor and as a person, thereby making my career decision easier.
- 104: My professor in undergrad school was influential in directing my career in Rhetoric & Public Address and assisted in getting a grant for me to pursue my PH.D. My professors in the Ph.D. program were wonderful and made my doctoral work a pleasant and rewarding experience.
- 105: no response
- 106: African American male professor-Speech Baptist Minister-social, emotional and academic support system for hundreds of African American students in the early to mid 1970's Florida State University.
- 107: I am physically impaired (polio, 1955) and considered a profession that allowed me to interact, using my people-skills to teach without the physical demands of other professions. Teaching carries with it stress, but the schedule one has on a university level allows me to pace myself appropriately with my limited mobility.
- 108: no response
- 109: no response
- 110: My father, who was a high school English teacher set a good example; also my interaction w/smart feminist teachers who were role models.
- 111: no response

- 112: I watch a lot of tv & wasn't satisfied w/Black representations; wanted to affect industry or policy decisions.
- 113: The intellectual stimulation at the master's degree level convinced me I wanted to be in higher education as a faculty member.
- 114: Being given the opportunity to teach a college communication class by Dr. Ray Wagner at Ohio University when I was a senior.
- 115: Lack of the interest in the business world
- 116: Being a member of the national forensic league in high school and a member of the varsity debate team in college.
- 117: no response
- 118: no response
- 119: I love to teach.
- 120: My major professor in my Master of Arts program (communication) at Florida State University. She, "Dr. Sandra Rackley," was a dynamic role model and a great asset to the field. By her "example," I was so inspired.
- 121: no response
- 122: no response
- 123: I look at teaching, especially at elementary and middle school levels, as fundamental to the future of humankind. What is done to people past these stages is only additional. Teaching is the nobel profession that deserves the most attention from the public and lawmakers.
- 124: My undergraduate & graduate professors in communication & history. My mother and father were also an important influence in my career choice.
- 125: no response
- 126: no response
- 127: Family; community's emphasis on service; personal dislike for "corporate" American/mainstream
- 128: no response
- 129: As an advocate of human and civil rights, I was influenced by instructors primarily Caucasian whose

sensitivity I felt toward human and civil rights issues. I have had one African American instructor doing 4 years of college and graduate school who provided me with the most ever directions on the importance of structure in writing, prior to that I remember one African (Nigerian if I remember correctly) political science teacher 10+ yrs prior to graduate school in community college--his course was supposed to be a "Black Perspective" on American government. I don't remember anything "Black" about it--oh yes, during the same quarter, I took "Black Perspective" on psychology that opened my eyes.

- 130: One of my college professors became my mentor. She influenced me so much that I followed in her footsteps.
- 131: The professors at Howard University greatly influenced my career choice. Specifically, Dr. Niles (who was on my Dissertation Committee) and my family.
- 132: I was fortunate enough to have a number of black teachers in elementary, high school, college, and graduate school who encouraged & inspired me. They worked with me long & hard & improve myself as a person and as a student.
- 133: I now am in Human Dev/Fam. Studies due to racism within the Comm. Dept. where I was going to get my Master's.